

mod plausible and overwhelming. They would nt to the fanatical spirit manifested, as we have n, by a large number of Christian soldiers in the ly, which led them to throw down their arms, sphcme the gods, and deity the Emperors. They aid point to the anti-social movement, which was ecially marked in l'-jjypt, where the example of Antony was drawing crowds of men and women ty into the desert to live out their lives, either in tary cells as hermits, or as members of religious imunities equally ascetic, and almost equally soli-7. They would point to the aloofness even of the inary Christian in city or in town from its common , and to his avoidance of office and public duties. ry would point to the extraordinary closeness of ties which bound Christians together,, to their >orate organisation, to the implicit and ready dience they paid to their bishops, and would ask ither so powerful a secret society, with ramifica-ts everywhere throughout the Empire, was nut ntably a menace to the established authorities, s Christians were peaceable enough. To accuse :n of plotting rebellion was hardly possible, ,igh the most outrageous calumnies against them their rites were sedulously fostered in order to ime the minds of the rabble, just as they wrre inst the Jews in the Middle Ages, and are, even at present clay, in certain parts of the Continent of •ope. But, at bottom, the real strength of the s against the Christians lay in the fact that the more ghtenecl pagans saw that Christianity was the* •cut which was bound to loosen all that held